

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON GENERAL INVESTIGATING

Hearing Date: March 9, 2021 2:00 PM - or upon final adjourn./recess or bill referral if permission granted

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COMMENTS FOR: Organizational meeting

Melinda Kerber

self

Austin, TX

I support legislation to create an independent redistricting commission that would function independently of the Legislature, in both membership and operation. Such a commission should use clear timelines, criteria, and procedures to draw the maps and allow for citizen participation throughout the entire map-making process.

The Legislature should implement procedural rules and timelines to increase public input, accountability, and transparency into the redistricting process. These procedures would also provide safeguards to communities protected under the Voting Rights Act by ensuring that they have a voice in the process. The following procedures are critical for fair redistricting:

1. Hold public input hearings after the census data is delivered to the state.
2. Allow virtual committee hearings to be held throughout the entire legislative session.
3. Provide at least 14 days to review the maps.
4. Provide 5 days to review any changes to proposed maps.
5. Provide an analysis of how the new maps impact historically disenfranchised communities of color.
6. Retain all documents, written communications, emails, text messages and draft maps.

Thank you,
Melinda Kerber
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